

The Bee's Home Magazine Page

Ambition's Trail--And the End!

By Nell Brinkley



Mademoiselle Gallant-Heart turned her eyes to the high, gold summit of Ambition. Above all the miles of brown earth and homely things, folks who dug in earth and mated, saved and ate, and slept, and clutched little grubby hands tight in theirs--all this was valley country, you see--above this valley country of peaceful, unglorified things loomed against the deep blue sky the thin, shimmering, dream-veiled, luminous pinnacle of Ambition! And the girl with the

gallant-heart sniffed in her nostrils the odor of the laurel crown and walked like one in a night dream, unseeing, through the valley and into the rocky trail that mounted like a trail of ribbon flung by the white hand of a god up the great wall of the Mountains of Fame. You see, the girl could write, and, somebody said, marvelously! So she tucked her sheets of 'stuff' under her brave round arm and set a small foot to the long trail. Well, there were tears, a-course, and the sweat of her temples ran into the salt of the

tears, and made one river down her chin, and she stubbed her toes and acufied out the spine of here 'Mary Jones' many, many times. Sometimes she fell--and her hair grew tangled and fell over her hot, straining eyes, and the dust of the trail settled on her brightness and tarnished the gilt of her hair. And sometimes the wind-bent grass and shrubbs she tugged at to drag her hand-breathing little body up over a stiffish place, ave way and ripped out by the roots. It was pretty bad, but through the tears and the sweat

the rose-hued, blinding height soared sweet to her eyes! So she toiled like a wild bee with the first wind of winter ruffling his wings. And one bright day when the way was smoother and the summit standing clear and close in the crystal air, on the last hurrying stretch, she lifted her eyes from the trail--and out from the gloom of the hillside forest that closed in here on her path a man stepped strongly, and stood half smiling with a beckon and a call in his eyes, his brown arms strong for lov-

ing and labor, youth painted on his lips and lean cheekbones, and his heart pulsing away under the skin of his shirt. How did she know this was the forest of romance, and that the way of ambition for a maid must wind through its well-bound shadow for a space? And that heaps of the gallant-hearted had left the trail right here? She couldn't, you see. You know the end. Her sheets of wonder-work lay in the dust, forgotten, the vision of the luminous peak faded out of her

conjured eyes, and she turned to meet the man! And when he wound his fingers close in hers and faced her about for the peace of the valley country, she went gaily at his side, snugged close, and singing a little song about Marpass, who lifted a god for a man! "On down in the peace of the valley country, where are homely things, folks who dig in the earth, and mate, save and sleep, and clutch little grubby fingers tight in theirs, the girl with the gallant-heart sat beneath her wide roof-tree

with the end of the trail in the hollow of her arm! And sometimes she lifted her eyes and saw lifted against the deep-blue sky the thin, shimmering, dream-veiled, pinnacle of the mountain of Ambition! But its lure was gone and it struck no fire in her eyes and heart! "I went half way," she laughed to the man from the woods of romance. "I lost and yet I won! Some day--I may help you to win there, my very dear."

—NELL BRINKLEY.

Baby of Future is Considered



Much thought has been given in late years to the subject of maternity. In the cities there are maternity hospitals equipped with modern methods. But most women prefer their own homes and in the towns and villages must prefer them. And since this is true we know from the great many splendid letters written on the subject that our "Mother's Friend" is a great help to expectant mothers. They write of the wonderful relief, how it seemed to allow the muscles to expand without undue strain and what a splendid influence it was on the nervous system. Such helps as "Mother's Friend" and the broader knowledge of them should have a helpful influence upon babies of the future. Science says that an infant derives its sense and builds its character from cutaneous impressions. And a tranquil mother certainly will transmit a more healthful influence than if she is extremely nervous from undue pain. This is what a host of women believe who used "Mother's Friend."

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THE PROFESSOR'S MYSTERY

by WELLS HASTINGS AND BRIAN HOOKER
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You Can Begin This Great Story To-day by Reading This First

Prof. Crosby casually encounters at a suburban trolley station Miss Tabor, whom he had met at a Christmas party, both being bound for the Almsleys. On the way the trolley is wrecked, nearly to Tabor's home, and there Crosby goes to spend the night. After retiring he is summoned and turned out to find accommodations at a nearby inn, no explanation being given him. He encounters Mr. Carucci in heated debate with a rough looking Italian the next day, and learns the Italian is one Carucci. Later at the Almsleys he meets Miss Tabor again, and they are getting on famously, when Dr. Walter Reid, Miss Tabor's stepbrother, turns up, and carries her off home. Crosby is warned he must not try to see Miss Tabor again. He persists, and is invited to accompany her on a midnight trip to the city, where they rescue Sheila, Miss Tabor's old nurse, from the effects of an assault committed on her by Carucci, who turns out to be Sheila's husband. In escaping from the city with Sheila, they have a brush with the police, but avoid being detained or identified. This sets the newspapers into the game, and one of the reporters, who comes closest to the truth, turns out to be MacLean, an old pal of Crosby's, who is persuaded to suppress the Tabor name, and to assist in clearing up the mystery. In the meantime Crosby has gotten into the good graces of the Tabor family, has learned that it is Margaret, who wedded Dr. Reid, who he is in love with Miriam, who answers to the family pet name of Lady. He and MacLean locate Carucci

working with a gang of graders near the Tabor home, and manage to stir up quite a row with him, when Sheila intervenes. Crosby returns to the Tabor, where he gets into an intimate conversation with Mrs. Tabor, only to be interrupted by Lady and her father. As a result of the conversation that followed Lady is left with her mother, who seems unafraid, while Crosby and Mr. Tabor go to have a smoke and talk over the situation. Tabor explains that his wife's health has been shattered since the death of a daughter several years prior, and that conditions are becoming unbearable. Carucci is the storm-center, and they agree that he must be gotten rid of. Sheila is to help. Crosby goes back to town and encounters MacLean, who has dug up some information as to Carucci. MacLean explains the situation, that is leading up to the solution of the mystery. It involves a visit to a spiritualistic seance, which Crosby makes under MacLean's guidance.

It was like the singing of children in a toneless unison, in its drizzled rhythms and slurring from note to note, and the absurd resemblance of the scene to a game of Jenkins-Op gave the final touch of incongruity. These people, or some of them at least, awaited the very presence of the dead, all were in quest of the supernatural or the unknown. Here were the dimness, the fragile, the impalpable weight of mutuality; the atmosphere of a coming crisis; and this in the commonplace room, closed up for the outside, with the traffic of the avenue and the commonplace people within, incongruous in their ordinary clothes, sitting with their hands upon a table and humming a hackneyed melody a little off the key. There was an unreality about it all, a touch of theatrical twinkle, of nummery and tinsel gold and canvas distance, an acuteness of that feeling which one always has in the climaxes of actual life that they can not be quite real because the setting is not strange enough. The mournful sound and the close air made me draw, thinking with the hurried vividness of a dream. It was unnatural for mysteries to happen in a drawing room; but then, mysteries were themselves unnatural, and must happen if at all in the world of there and then. Though it seemed somehow that a ghost should appear only upon the storied battlements of elusiveness to people in archaic dress, yet it Hamlet himself those surroundings were the scene of ordinary days, and the persons of all the wonder-story had been in their own slight, not-at-all-citizens. Macbeth saw Banquo at the dinner table, and it was the people in the street who crowded to look upon the miracle.

The eventless waiting drew out interminably. There were long silences, then the humming of some other tune, and it was an episode when some one coughed or stirred. Yet the monotony, despite boredom and drowsiness, did not relax the nervous tension. I still felt that something was going to happen the next minute; the air grew closer and closer, and the odd sense of crowded human intimacy was more oppressive than at first; and the rigid regularity of MacLean's audible breathing was not proof against the same influence. The circle about the table were awaiting their heads a little in time with their singing, while the old gentleman in the corner fidgeted uneasily in the street outside, a child began to cry loudly, and was taken away still wailing around the corner. Surely, I thought, I of all people ought to understand that incongruous look of strange things happening in actual life my own had been for weeks a nightmare and a romance; and even now I was groping mentally in the maze of a revelation that had the hard logic of a melodrama, flawlessly plausible and incredible only because I was unwilling to believe. Carucci's story was a fabrication, because tangled marriages and family mysteries happened in books and newspapers, among printed people, not among those we know; yet melodrama itself builds with the material of actuality, and I had been living amid family mysteries. Such things do happen to some one; and that one must be to--to others--the reality that Lady was to me.

I started violently, and sat bolt upright, my hair tingling and every muscle tightened. A dull rapping, like the sound of a hammer upon wood covered with cloth, came from the table. The circle were silent, leaning back in their seats, their hands still joined before them. The medium had sunk down in her chair, her arms extended along the arms of it, so that those next here had to reach out to keep hold of her hands. And above the group I saw, or imagined that I saw, the vaguest conceivable cloudiness in mid-

air, like mist on a foggy night or the glimmer seen inside closed eyelids after looking at a brightly lighted window. The more I tried to make sure that I saw it, the more I doubted whether it were not merely imagination. If you hold your spread hand before a dark background, you will seem to see a cloudy blur outline the fingers; it was like that. The rapping was repeatedly more loudly, and through the throbbing in my ears and the almost suffocating oppression, I caught myself remembering the scene of the knocking at the gate in Macbeth. Then a voice began to speak, a querulous, throasty contralto that came in jerks and pauses.

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(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)